

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 SAJ-01 EB-11 FPC-01 XMB-07 ACDA-19

IO-14 FEA-02 TRSE-00 SCI-06 DRC-01 /163 W

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R 221625Z MAR 74

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3161

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 0515

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, GE, GW, WB, PL, UR

SUBJECT: ELECTRIC POWER LINE FROM POLAND TO FRG AND WEST BERLIN

REF: BERLIN 474

1. SUMMARY: IN APPARENT EFFORT TO ASCERTAIN FIRMNESS OF FRG POSITION, ACTING HEAD POLISH MILITARY MISSION TOLD POLAD MARCH 20 HE FORESAW "POLITICAL PROBLEM" FOR GDR IF PROPOSED POLAND-FRG POWER LINE WAS ROUTED DIRECTLY THROUGH WEST BERLIN. POLAD SAID HE UNDERSTOOD FRG FAVORED THIS ROUTING FOR ECONOMIC/TECHNICAL REASONS, AND THAT NO POLITICAL PROBLEM SEEMED TO BE INVOLVED. THIS WAS, IN ANY CASE, ESSENTIALLY A POLISH-GERMAN DECISIONS. IN COURSE OF PRESS BRIEFING IN LEIPZIG,, FRG STATE SECRETARY ROHWEDDER ALSO TOUCHED ON ROUTING OF POWER LINES FROM EASTERN EUROPE, NOTING THAT IT WOULD BE UP TO POLES (AND SOVIETS), NOT FRG, TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS WITH GDR. END SUMMARY.

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2. KOPA, ACTING HEAD OF POLISH MILITARY MISSION IN BERLIN, CALLED ON POLAD MARCH 20 TO DISCUSS TALKS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS BETWEEN POLISH AND WEST GERMAN/WEST BERLIN CONCERNS ON CONSTRUCTION OF ELECTRIC POWER LINE BETWEEN POLAND AND FRG AND WEST BERLIN. THESE TALKS, ACCORDING TO KOPA, WERE PROCEEDING QUITE SATISFACTORILY ON TECHNICAL PLANE, BUT POINT WAS NOW BEING REACHED WHERE PROBLEM MORE POLITICAL THAN TECHNICAL IN NATURE WOULD HAVE TO BE CONFRONTED, NAMELY WHETHER PROPOSED LINE WOULD PASS DIRECTLY THROUGH WEST BERLIN ON WAY TO FRG OR WHETHER IT WOULD BE CONSTRUCTED ON MORE NORTHERLY ROUTE, WITH BRANCH LINE LEADING SOUTH FROM APPROPRIATE POINT IN GDR TO WEST BERLIN. FRG AND WEST BERLIN, SAID KOPA, APPARENTLY REGARDED ROUTING OF LINE AS A PURELY ECONOMIC/TECHNICAL QUESTION AND IGNORED POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS. POLISH SIDE, HOWEVER, COULD NOT AVOID TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SENSITIVITIES OF GDR, ACROSS WHOSE TERRITORY LINE WOULD NECESSARILY HAVE TO RUN. GDR, KOPA VENTURED, WOULD PROBABLY VIEW CONSTRUCTION OF DIRECT LINE THROUGH WEST BERLIN IN POLITICAL CONTEXT, AS UNACCEPTABLE DEMONSTRATION OF FRG-WEST BERLIN TIES.

3. WHILE NOTING THAT THIS SEEMED TO BE IN FIRST INSTANCE MATTER FOR DIRECT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN POLES AND WEST GERMANS, POLAD SAID THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT FRG WAS INTERESTED FOR ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL REASONS IN HAVING LINE PASS DIRECTLY THROUGH WEST BERLIN. NO POLITICAL PROBLEM SEEMED TO BE INVOLVED. INDEED, POLAD NOTED, IT WAS PRECISELY THIS KIND OF ECONOMIC LINK WHICH SOVIETS HAD ACKNOWLEDGED DURING NEGOTIATION OF QA AS LEGITIMATE "TIE" BETWEEN FRG AND BERLIN. POLAD SAID THAT ALLIES WERE OF COURSE IN CONTACT WITH FRG SO AS TO ENSURE THAT PROJECT ACCORDED WITH OUR GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF WEST BERLIN, BUT REPEATED THAT DETAILS WERE MATTER FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN POLISH AND WEST GERMAN PARTIES. AT CONCLUSION OF CONVERSATION KOPA AVERRED--SOMEWHAT DISINGENUOUSLY IN LIGHT OF HIS INITIAL COMMENTS--THAT IT WOULD BE CONFIDENTIAL

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HELPFUL TO ALL CONCERNED (I.E., SOVIETS, POLES AND GDR) IF FRG PURSUED THIS PROJECT SOLELY ON ECONOMIC MERITS AND DID NOT SEEK TO POLITICIZE IT. POLAD RESPONDED THAT POLES SHOULD PERHAPS PERSUADE THEIR EAST GERMAN ALLIES TO ADOPT SIMILAR APPROACH.

4. COMMENT: IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN FROM KOPA'S REMARKS PRECISELY WHAT HIS INTENTION WAS IN RAISING

MATTER WITH MISSION. APPARENTLY HE WISHED TO TEST US/ALLIED REACTION TO "PROBLEM" AS HE HAD PHRASED IT, AND WAS PROBING TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER FRG INTENDED TO STAND FIRM ON POLAND-WEST BERLIN-FRG ROUTING FOR PROPOSED POWER LINE.

5. IN MEETING WITH WEST GERMAN PRESS ON MARGIN OF LEIPZIG FAIR (SEPARATE AIRGRAM), FRG STATE SECRETARY ROHWEDDER TOUCHED ON PLANNED PURCHASES BY FRG OF SOVIET AND POLISH POWER, COMMENTING THAT POLES AND SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS WITH GDR FOR ITS TRANSMISSION AND THAT POWER WOULD HAVE TO BE DELIVERED TO FRG AND WEST BERLIN ON "FREE BORDER" BASIS. ROHWEDDER DID NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTION TRANSMISSION LINE ROUTES, BUT INTIMATED THAT POLES AND SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM WITH GDR.BORG

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